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*A Call for Friendship Between the  
Peoples of the United States and the  
Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea*

IM IL SUNG

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE DPRK



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by

KIM IL SUNG

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## FOREWORD

For the first time since its founding, the President of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, Kim Il Sung, has been given the opportunity to speak directly to the people of the United States. (A previous interview, conducted by Harrison Salisbury of the *New York Times*, was never published in full).

We feel pleased and honored to have this opportunity to become the medium through which this historic event takes place.

Following are the questions presented to the President:

1. In the recent period important victories have been won by the peoples of Indochina, Guinea-Bissau and elsewhere. How would you characterize the present moment as regard the national liberation movements?

2. The Seoul regime has given as a reason for a new wave of repression the delicate nature of reunification efforts. Would you comment on this?

3. The DPRK has warned in recent years of the possibility of a new war breaking out in Korea. Have the chances of war increased or decreased, and what are the factors operating in this situation?

4. With the forced abandonment of UNCURK, U.S. imperialism has suffered an important reverse. However, the "UN" Command remains, giving a cover to U.S. occupation forces in south Korea. How does this affect the national aspirations of the Korean people for reunification?

5. Would you give your estimate of the new mass student and religious protests against the Seoul regime?

6. Since the July 4, 1972 North-South joint statement on reunification, the DPRK has won new diplomatic victories with recognition from several more countries, membership in the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Jurists Organization and observer status in the United Nations. To what do you attribute these new breakthroughs?

7. With the DPRK's new observer status in the United Nations, there have been periodic rumors of the possibility of state relations between the DPRK and the U.S. being established. What would the necessary preconditions be for the establishment of such relations?

8. What suggestions would you make to the progressive movements and the working people of the United States in their quest for world peace in general, and in Korea in particular?

The editors would like to publicly thank President Kim Il Sung for his courtesy in responding to our questions.

*The Executive Board of AKFIC; Korea Focus Editorial Board*

## INTRODUCTION

I would like to express thanks to the American-Korean Friendship and Information Center and the editorial board of the magazine *Korea Focus* for giving wide publicity to our people's struggle to build socialism and achieve the independent, peaceful reunification of our country; and for their extensive activities in exposing the fascist dictatorship of the south Korean reactionaries and their nation-splitting policy, as well as U.S. aggression in Korea and interference in the latter's internal affairs.

I believe that the American-Korean Friendship and Information Center and the editorial board of the magazine *Korea Focus* will continue to give active support and encouragement to the revolutionary cause of our people. Now I would like to answer your questions.

You have asked many questions, and for convenience's sake, I would like to answer them in some groups classified according to their messages.



## **THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT**

To begin with, I would like to respond to the question of how to characterize the present period in connection with the National Liberation Movement.

Today the peoples' national liberation movements of Asia, Africa and Latin America are making victorious advances. The peoples of these continents, who have long suffered from oppression by imperialism and colonialism, have cast off the colonial yoke and risen as one in the solemn struggle for their countries' independence and national liberation. Many peoples are fighting bravely with arms in hands. Amidst the continuous upsurge of the national liberation struggle a great number of countries have achieved their national independence.

The national liberation movements of the newly independent countries are now gaining in depth and scope, assuming new forms. Holding aloft the banner of anti-imperialism and independence, the peoples of the third world, who were condemned to exploitation and oppression in the bygone days, have resolutely risen in struggle to safeguard their political independence, protect their natural resources and territorial waters and bring about social progress. Under the impact of the courageous peoples' struggles of the third world against imperialist domination and interference and for the liquidation of colonialist hangovers and the realization of independence in all fields—political, economic, military and cultural—imperialism is being shaken to its very foundation.

The imperialists now most bitterly hate and fear the national liberation movements of the third world peoples and are making every possible attempt to strangle them. In order to sway independent anti-imperialist countries to the right and tear them away from the anti-imperialist front, the U.S. imperialists, while interfering in their internal affairs, have in recent years frequently engineered reactionary military coups by bribing and whipping up the reactionaries. The fascist military coup which took place in Chile last year is a striking illustration.

The imperialists' attempt to block the revolutionary struggle of the people by force is folly and absurd; it is nothing but the death bed struggle of a doomed man. There may be temporary setbacks and turns and twists in the course of the revolutionary struggle. But no force can check the revolutionary advancement and prevent the final victory of the revolution. This is an inexorable law of historical development.

Although the national liberation movements in some countries are now temporarily going through difficulties and tribulations owing to imperialist intervention and plots to overthrow the governments, the general international situation is developing strongly in favor of the revolutionary peoples and to the disadvantage of the imperialists and colonialists.

In terms of the national liberation struggle, the present era can be characterized as an historical turning point when the colonial system of imperialism is crumbling for good and the liberation struggle of the oppressed people to achieve independence and self-reliance is winning the day on an extensive scale.

The days are forever gone when the imperialists dominated the world and decided the fate of the exploited people. Today the oppressed people, who were once deprived of their national independence and sovereignty, and were left outside history, have emerged as masters of the world. The old order is gone when the great powers bargained over the international problems among themselves and disposed of them at will. The newly-emerging force has an ever greater voice and authority to decide international problems. The processes of the recent special session of the United Nations General Assembly on raw materials and development and the 17th Congress of the Universal Postal Union were graphic illustrations of this trend of our age.

The people of the third world, the newly-emerging force, is now a powerful motive force of human history and a great revolutionary force fighting against imperialism. The third world peoples' appearance on the scene of history has brought about a radical change in the international balance of forces and is hastening the doomsday of imperialism.

We are fully convinced that the day will soon come when imperialism and colonialism are wiped out for good by the joint struggle of the third world peoples; and when the national liberation movements of the peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America win complete victory.

## ***THE ROAD TO REUNIFICATION***

Now a few remarks on the reunification question of our country. The invariable stand of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of our Republic concerning the country's reunification is to achieve it independently and peacefully, and on a democratic basis. Ever since the day our country was divided into north and south, we have endeavored with perseverance to peacefully reunify Korea by the Korean people



themselves without any foreign interference. And we advanced innumerable fair and realistic proposals for reunification.

After the announcement of the North-South Joint Statement on July 4, 1972, we advanced many reasonable proposals to promote the cause of reunification, in conformity with requirements of the Joint Statement, the gist of which is the three principles of independence, peaceful reunification and great national unity. Most typical of our proposals is the five-point proposition of national reunification—to eliminate military confrontation and ease tension between the north and the south; to realize a many-sided collaboration and interchange; to convene a Great National Congress composed of representatives of people of all walks of life, political parties and social organizations in the north and the south; to institute a north-south Confederation under the single name of the country, Confederal Republic of Koryo, and to enter the UN as a single state under the name, Confederal Republic of Koryo. It is our firm belief that this five-point proposition is most realistic and fair to settle the reunification question in conformity to the will and demand of the entire people in north and south Korea.

Some time ago, as another important step to create favorable conditions to eliminate tension in Korea and facilitate independent and peaceful reunification, we sent a letter of the Supreme Peoples' Assembly to the U.S. Congress in which we proposed concluding a peace agreement with the United States. In the letter, we suggested that the peace agreement should provide that: both sides refrain from invading each other, and discontinue military reinforcement and the arms race; the United States not interfere in the internal affairs of Korea nor obstruct its reunification, and withdraw its troops stationed in south Korea; and Korea not be made a military or operational base of any other country after the withdrawal of the U.S. troops. If a peace agreement is signed between Korea and the United States in accordance with our proposal, tension will be removed in our country; moreover, a most favorable phase will open for the solution of Korea's reunification problem.

Our recent proposals for national reunification are warmly supported and welcomed by the entire Korean people and the progressive people of the world. This clearly testifies to the correctness of our reunification propositions.

However, the rulers of the United States, and the south Korean authorities, backed up by them reject our just proposals for reunification and attempt in every way to check our sincere efforts for their realization.



After the north-south dialogue for reunification started and the North-South Joint Statement was announced, the south Korean authorities further stepped up their acts of national division. Trampling on the unanimous desire of the whole nation for reunification, they publicly announced the "two Koreas" plot aimed at perpetuating the country's division as a "policy," and they are resorting to every possible maneuver and scheme to carry it into effect. As you know, the south Korean authorities attempted to pass a resolution on the simultaneous entry into the United Nations of north and south Korea through last year's General Assembly session, but met with ignominious failure in the eyes of the world's peoples.

Behind the screen of the north-south dialogue the south Korean authorities continue their severe fascist repression of the south Korean people. Taking continuous repressive measures such as proclaiming a "state of emergency," "martial law" and an "emergency measure," they frequently call out army troops and police forces to close down educational institutions and repress the righteous struggle of the students and the people: Central Intelligence agents have been implanted everywhere to watch every move of the people and restrict all their activities. The crooked hands of the south Korean CIA have stretched out even to the Koreans living in Japan and the United States. Of late, the south Korean authorities have trumped up the so-called "case of a spy group" and "case of the General Federation of Democratic Youth and Students" and so on, arresting innumerable youths and students and people of all strata at will, brutally torturing them and conducting murderous court trials to impose severe penalties.

The south Korean authorities allege that all these repressive fascist measures are necessary for the north-south dialogue and reunification, but this is nothing but an absurd pretext. In reality, their repressive measures are aimed at materializing their plot to divide the nation and their wild ambition to remain in power forever.

### **SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY PROVOCATIONS AND THEIR POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES**

The south Korean authorities advocate "peaceful reunification" in word, but, in deed, they persist in war preparations and military provocations. Under the slogan of "modernization of the National Army" they are introducing different types of up-to-date weapons and military equipment into south Korea,

and are incessantly carrying out military provocations and war exercises against the northern half of the Republic. This has created a situation in our country which threatens to set off another war at any time.

More specifically, the United States is encouraging the south Korean authorities in the acts of war provocation. It provides them with weapons and military equipment; and it is the United States that abets them in the acts of war provocation.

The United States not only eggs on the south Korean authorities to provoke war but also maintains tens of thousands of U.S. troops in south Korea. This is a major factor aggravating tension and engendering the danger of war in our country, and remains the greatest obstacle to reunification.

## **U.S. TROOPS MUST GET OUT OF SOUTH KOREA**

The U.S. imperialists are keeping their troops in south Korea under the name of "UN forces." This is entirely unjustified. Under the "UN Command" there are no troops of any other country but the United States which act solely on orders of the U.S. Army Commander. In fact, they have nothing to do with the United Nations. "U.N. forces" is nothing but an ostentatious name to cover up the aggressive nature of the U.S. occupation troops in south Korea.

The phantom "U.N. Command" must be dissolved as soon as possible. In our opinion, the United Nations, whose name has been abused, should pay serious attention to this. As a result of the positive struggle of the Government of our Republic and of many countries, the "United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea," an instrument of U.S. aggression and interference in our country, was dissolved by a decision of the U.N. General Assembly last year. This was a great victory for us and an important step towards the solution of our reunification question. We will likewise strive to dissolve the "U.N. Command" and thus strip the U.S. occupation army in south Korea of the helmet of the "U.N. forces, and get it to withdraw.

To remove tension in Korea and facilitate peaceful reunification today, it is necessary to replace the Armistice Agreement with a peace agreement.

The Korean Armistice Agreement signed in July, 1953 is, to all intents and purposes, an agreement on a military truce, and cannot be a guarantee for a lasting peace. Now, over twenty



years since its signing, this agreement is out of touch with the present reality in many respects. Therefore, we have more than once proposed to the south Korean authorities to conclude a peace agreement which will ensure a lasting peace in our country. However, they have not listened to our proposals. They do not want to sign a peace agreement, nor are they competent to do so because all real power in south Korea is in the hands of the U.S. imperialists. The whole course of the north-south dialogue clearly shows this.

That is why we deemed it right to discuss the question of concluding a peace agreement directly with the United States whose army troops are stationed in south Korea; which holds all control of south Korea's military affairs; and is a signatory to the Korean Armistice Agreement. We thus proposed to the United States to hold negotiations for the solution of this question.

It is more than two months since we sent the letter to the U.S. Congress, but the U.S. authorities have not yet replied. This means that the U.S. imperialists have not dropped aggressive designs on our country yet, and proves that the "peace" pronounced by them is a sham.

## ***THE PATRIOTIC STRUGGLES OF THE SOUTH KOREAN PEOPLE***

You asked me to evaluate the struggle of the youth, students and people of south Korea against its authorities. Their struggle is a patriotic struggle to save the country and the nation and to reunify the country.

The courageous struggle they have been waging since last October is dealing a heavy blow to the splitters and reactionaries who scheme for the permanent division of the nation and suppression of the people.

The ranks of fighting people in south Korea now embrace large numbers of people from all walks of life, including youth and students, professors, journalists and the religious community. They oppose the scheme of the south Korean authorities to perpetuate national division, fascization and their policy of dependence on foreign forces; they want reunification of the country and democratization of south Korean society. Due to the fascist tyranny of the south Korean authorities, the youth, students and people of south Korea are now undergoing an ordeal in their struggle, but they will be tempered and

attain maturity in this ordeal. Their righteous patriotic struggle will certainly obtain final victory.

## **GROWTH OF DPRK PRESTIGE AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR ITS REUNIFICATION POLICIES**

Now I would like to refer to the factors in the Great Victories the DPRK has won in its foreign relations in recent years. As you know, with the active support of the socialist countries, the third world nations and the progressive people throughout the world, our Republic has in recent years frustrated U.S. imperialism's policy of isolation and blockade against our country, and won fresh diplomatic victories. In the past few years, the DPRK has established diplomatic relations with scores of countries; it has won membership in a number of international organizations such as the World Health Organization, the Interparliamentary Union and the Universal Postal Union; and it has set up its mission at the United Nations. This now is an international trend: many countries recognize and establish friendly relations with our country and express support and sympathy for our people's revolutionary cause.

Such great diplomatic victories scored by our country are due to the growth in strength of the DPRK and the rise in its international prestige, thanks to the correctness of all the lines and policies of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic, and to the great successes our people have achieved in the revolution and construction.

All the lines and policies of our party and the Government of the Republic proceed from the *juche* idea and are permeated with this idea. We shape all our lines and policies for the revolution and construction by creatively doing our own thinking in conformity with the specific conditions of our country and the demands and interests of our people.

Take for example the basic line of national reunification consistently followed by the Government of our Republic. It is strictly based on *juche* stand. Our line for reunifying the country independently and peacefully on the principle of democracy is the only correct solution to the question of national reunification by the masters of Korea, the Koreans themselves, in conformity with their wishes and interests. This is why all the progressive people of the world who value justice and peace, not to mention the entire people in north and south Korea who love the country and the nation and are desirous of na-



tional reunification, are unanimous in supporting our line of independent and peaceful reunification.

In foreign affairs also, the Government of our Republic strictly maintains an independent and revolutionary position and pursues a straight foreign policy.

In our external activities, we never dance to the tune of others, nor do we act on anybody's orders or instructions. We always solve all problems, big and small, in our foreign relations, including the relations between states, from our own conviction and independent judgment, in conformity with our country's reality and with the lofty aspirations and desires of our people and the people of the world.

The Government of the Republic is striving to promote friendship and cooperation with all the progressive countries, including those in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and to strengthen militant solidarity with the revolutionary people of the world.

Our Republic extends its active support and encouragement to the national liberation struggles and the revolutionary struggles of the peoples of all countries against imperialism. In particular, the Government of our Republic makes it an iron rule to render unconditional and unreserved support and encouragement to the revolutionary cause of the peoples of the third world fighting to defend their national independence and sovereignty and to build a new society. It also consistently adheres to the line of active struggle against the policy of aggression and war followed by the U.S. and other imperialists, and in defense of world peace and security.

These domestic and foreign policies of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic express not only our people's wishes and longing but also the common aspirations and desires of the world's peoples and fully conform to the contemporary trend of all countries advancing along the path of independence. That is why all these policies have the active support and sympathy of the socialist countries, the third world nations and all the progressive people of the world.

Heartily subscribing to the correct lines and policies of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic, our people in the past waged a heroic struggle in the high revolutionary spirit of self-reliance and thus converted our once backward agrarian country into a powerful socialist industrial state in a short time. At present we produce for ourselves almost all supplies necessary for the prosperity and development of the country and the livelihood of the people: our economy keeps advancing at a fast rate, relying on our own raw ma-

terials and technology, without being affected by the economic upheavals which have swept the whole world.

Our people's great successes in the revolution and construction in the past years have enhanced the might of the DPRK beyond comparison; accordingly, its international prestige has risen higher than ever before. Herein lies a factor in our country's new diplomatic victories in recent years.

Holding aloft the banner of anti-imperialism and independence, and united firmly with the socialist countries, the countries of the third world and all the progressive people of the world, our people will continue to firmly struggle for the victory of the common cause of peace, democracy, national independence and socialism.

## ***DPRK-U.S. RELATIONS***

Now I would like to pass to the question of the relations between Korea and the U.S.

Ever since its inception, the DPRK has always developed friendship and cooperation on the principle of equality and mutual benefit with all countries that are friendly towards our country, irrespective of their sizes and social systems. Our country now has state relations with more than eighty countries and promotes trade with over one hundred countries, many of them capitalist.

However, as yet there exist no friendly relations between the DPRK and the United States. This is entirely because the U.S. government pursues a hostile policy towards our country.

You asked me what is the prerequisite for the establishment of state relations between the DPRK and the United States. First of all, the U.S. government should drop its hostile policy and stop aggressive acts against our country.

For nearly 30 years the United States has been occupying the southern half of our country and conducting aggressive acts against our people. Lately, it has sent high-speed, high-altitude reconnaissance planes and helicopters into our air space to conduct espionage and hostile activities, thereby increasing tension in our country. It is introducing various new types of weapons and operational equipment on a large scale into south Korea, and recently is bringing there the newest formations of U.S. fighter-bombers hitherto stationed in Taiwan and Thailand.

The hostile and aggressive policy of the U.S. government towards our country remains unchanged as ever. The U.S. gov-



ernment mouths "peace" in Korea, but, in deed, it is not the least interested in peace. If the United States sincerely wants peace in Korea, it should accept our peace loving initiative to conclude a peace agreement and drop its hostile and aggressive acts against our country.

As long as the U.S. government persists in aggressive acts against our people without renouncing its hostile policy towards our country, relations between the two countries cannot be improved. How can one establish good relations with a fellow who has intruded into one's house with a dagger in his hand? There can be friendly relations between countries and these relations can be fruitful only when they take a friendly attitude toward one another on the principles of equality and mutual respect.

If the United States is to improve its relations with our country, it should also refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of our country and stop hampering Korea's reunification.

The United States should not impede but should help the reunification of Korea. To do so, it must first of all remove its troops from south Korea.

The continued stay of U.S. troops in south Korea runs counter both to the Korean Armistice Agreement, which provides for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea, and to the North-South Joint Statement which gives a pledge that the Korean people will reunify their country independently.

Even from South Viet Nam, where a truce was made last year, the United States has withdrawn its forces. What is the need of maintaining its troops in south Korea until now despite the armistice which was declared more than twenty years ago in our country? It is high time the U.S. forces left south Korea.

In the international arena including the United Nations, the United States should refrain from acts which perpetuate the division of Korea, and should stop taking a unwarranted attitude towards our country. The U.S. government is encouraging the Japanese militarists and the south Korean reactionaries to actively pursue the "two Koreas" plot for the permanent division of Korea. This is a very unfriendly, hostile act against our people. The United States must discontinue such an unfriendly act against our country.

In a nutshell, for the establishment of state relations between Korea and the United States, it is necessary that the U.S. government discard its antagonistic and aggressive policy towards our country and stop impeding Korea's reunification.

Provided these prerequisites are satisfied, we are ready to

improve our relations with the United States, although Korea and the United States have differing social systems and many problems remain unsettled between them.

## **KOREAN PEOPLE SUPPORT ANTI-IMPERIALISM, PEACE STRUGGLE OF THE U.S. PEOPLE**

In conclusion, I should like to give a brief answer to your question whether we have any suggestions to the progressive movement and working people of the United States.

The progressive movements and working people in the United States are waging an unyielding struggle against their reactionary ruling circles' policy of aggression and war; and for world peace and security, and their democratic liberties and rights. The American people's anti-war struggle gives great support and stimulus to the peoples fighting against imperialist aggression, and a heavy blow to the reactionary ruling circles of the United States. The Korean people highly appreciate the just struggle of the U.S. people and express firm solidarity with it.

The progressive people of the United States are raising their voices for the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from south Korea, for peace and an end to U.S. imperialist aggression in Korea. This greatly encourages our people. We express our earnest thanks to the progressive people of the United States for their active support and encouragement to the Korean people who are fighting for the independent, peaceful reunification of their country.

We are convinced that the U.S. people, in union with the Korean people and other peace-loving peoples, will also in the future wage a vigorous joint struggle against the U.S. imperialist policy of aggression and war, for peace in Korea, the Far East and the rest of the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely wish the American-Korean Friendship and Information Center and the editorial board of the magazine *Korea Focus* still greater success in their future activities.





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We are an anti-imperialist peace organization, devoted to friendship between the peoples of the United States and Korea, especially the people of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (North Korea).

Our main function is to disseminate among the American people information regarding the historic background of the Korean people, the Korean nation and current problems in respect to reunification.

Governments may establish diplomatic relations between countries which is normal, acceptable and expected if nations are to live in peace with each other. But such diplomatic relations does not, ipso facto, guarantee people-to-people friendship.

The very guarantee that diplomatic relations between countries will continue to grow, develop and mature, is to develop and strengthen the friendship of the people of the respective countries. That is why we invite you:

- To become a sponsor member of our organization.
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- To subscribe and read our publication, *Korea Focus*.
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Whatever contributions you make in whatever field you choose, you are actively participating in the great crusade of mankind, through detente and peaceful co-existence, to make war between nations and people a ghastly memory of the past.

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